



# 2006 Michigan Youth Horse Racing Program **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

*"Bringing yesterday's tradition of horse racing back to our youth"*

## **I. Entry Fee**

1. There will be an entry fee of \$15.00 per participant per entry. The hosting fair will keep \$5.00 for processing fees and the remaining \$10.00 will be used to help offset the championship race expenses.

## **II. Eligibility of the horse**

1. An equis that is eligible to participate in the Michigan Youth Horse Racing Program includes all sound and healthy horses, ponies, jackasses, and mules.
  - Colts and stallions are not allowed to race.
2. A negative coggins test submitted by a licensed veterinarian within the current calendar year must be provided for all horses participating in the race. (Note: Calendar year, as referenced in this point, is defined as December 1 through December 31 of the following December [13 Months].)
3. Ponies will be measured at the certification clinic. They must measure 56 inches or less with ½ inch shoes. Pony cards will not be accepted.

## **III. Eligibility of the participant**

1. No participant will be allowed to race below the age of 10 or above the age of 19 as of January 1 of the current year.
2. Participants should have had at least 2 years of riding experience.
3. Participants may enter only once in each equine specie per race program.
4. Participants must be capable of controlling their horse at all times.
5. Participants must be certified by a Michigan Youth Horse Racing Program Official(s) [here after referred to as Program Official(s)] before being allowed to compete.
6. Information & Medical Release Form
  - A. Each participant must complete a form and have it signed by a parent or legal guardian. If the participant is 18 years of age, as of January 1 of the current year, he/she may complete and sign his/her own form.
  - B. Each form must include, but not limited to:
    - 1) Name
    - 2) Address
    - 3) Contact phone number
    - 4) Date of birth
    - 5) Number of years riding

- 6) Previous horse experience
- 7) Liability release
- 8) Emergency medical information
- C. Participants must complete and submit a new form at every Youth Horse Racing Program event.
- D. The completed form must be turned in to the Program Official(s) at least 1 hour prior to the scheduled post time.
- E. If, at anytime, it is discovered the information provided on the form was false or misrepresented, the Program Official(s) have the right to:
  - 1) Deny certification or revoke certification
  - 2) Revoke any awards or purses that may have been awarded
  - 3) Issue ineligibility for future participation in future Youth Horse Racing Program events during the current Youth Horse Racing Program season.

#### **IV. Certification**

- 1. Certification Clinic
  - A. Each participant must go through a certification clinic in order to be certified to race.
  - B. Certification clinics will be held at the race location.
  - C. The horse the participant plans to ride in the race will need to be brought to the certification clinic in order to determine the participant's controllability.
- 2. Riding Tests
  - A. Each participant will be required to demonstrate the following with the horse they plan to race:
    - 1) A controlled lap altering several speeds
    - 2) A stop from a lope or canter
    - 3) Back one horse length in a straight line
    - 4) Perform a controlled figure eight with a simple or flying lead change
  - B. Each maneuver will be scored from 1 to 5 based on the following explanations:
    - 1) 1 = Unsatisfactory
    - 2) 2 = Poor
    - 3) 3 = Satisfactory
    - 4) 4 = Very good
    - 5) 5 = Excellent
  - C. In order for a participant to pass the riding test portion of the certification program, he/she must score no less than 3 points on each maneuver for a score total of 12 or higher.
- 3. Awarding Certification
  - A. The Program Official(s) will award certification to race at any of the approved races to those who have submitted a signed information sheet and have performed the riding test resulting in an acceptable score.
  - B. Each certified participant will receive recognition for their certification, which will need to be presented upon entering all races.
  - C. Certification is only valid for the participant/horse team that participated in a certification clinic.

- If there is a change in the participant/horse team, the new team must be certified before being allowed to compete in a race.
- D. Certification is valid for one Michigan Youth Horse Racing season. (Example: Certification issued during a Michigan Youth Horse Racing event in 2005 will be valid through the conclusion of the 2005 Youth Horse Racing events.)
- E. Once certified, certification can be revoked at any time deemed necessary by a Program Official(s).

## **V. Program Officials Responsibilities**

1. Each location hosting a Michigan Youth Horse Racing Program event must have at least three designated and approved Program Officials as defined in Section VII 7-A of these Rules and Regulations.
2. Program Official(s) representing the host location is required to locate personnel to assist in the organization and running of the Michigan Youth Horse Racing Program. The Program Official(s) must designate individuals to fulfill all roles as defined under section VII – General Rules.
3. Program Official(s) are vested with the sole and complete power and authority to determine when a disqualification is proper, its extent, and whether it applies to any other part of an entry. Their decision shall be final.
4. Program Official(s) have the right to post-pone or cancel a heat or race if the weather or track conditions are not favorable. These conditions include rain, lightening, heat, humidity, or any other condition that jeopardize the safety and welfare of the participants and their horses.

## **VI. Race Rules**

1. The race is to be run at the canter or gallop
  - A. Canter: Medium 3 beat gait
  - B. Gallop: Four beat gait
  - C. Sprint: Short distance, full exertion from the horse
2. Heats
  - A. The heat order and participants in each heat will be announced prior to the start of the race.
  - B. The Program Official(s) has the right to determine the field number for each heat. It is recommended to race 3 to 5 participants per heat.
  - C. Race divisions will be divided by age group and equine species
    - 1) Mules (All Ages)
    - 2) Jackasses (All Ages)
    - 3) Pony (All Ages)
    - 4) Horses
      - a) Juniors (Ages 10 – 14 as of January 1 of the current year)
      - b) Seniors (Ages 15 – 19 as of January 1 of the current year)
  - D. Heats within the race groups will be divided according to the specifications deemed by the Program Official(s) once all of the entries have been received.
3. Race Structure
  - A. An appointed volunteer will assist participants get fitted in to safety vests and/or helmets.

- B. Each participant will be provided a number or other identification as to aid the race judges in identifying participants.
- C. An appointed volunteer will check equipment, participant and horse as noted below:
  - 1) Participants helmet secured
  - 2) Participants vest secured & snug fitting
  - 3) Participant wearing long sleeved shirt
  - 4) Participant wearing full length pants
  - 5) Participant wearing heeled boots
  - 6) Participant number secured and visible
  - 7) Breast collar, throat latch & back cinch fastened
  - 8) Cinch tightened
  - 9) Continuous reins
  - 10) Does participant feel safe?
- D. Heat participants will be announced
  - It is recommended heat participants parade in front of the grandstand as they are introduced.
- E. Get Ready Signal
  - 1) The race will be conducted with a walking start.
  - 2) The get ready signal initiates all participants in that heat to begin walking to the starting line.
  - 3) After the get ready signal has been given, the participants will walk toward the starting line to be signaled to start. All participants must utilize the walking start.
  - 4) Only the participants in the current heat and Youth Horse Racing Program personnel will be allowed in the starting area. For the safety of all involved, participants must be able to control their own horse, if they require assistance in the starting area and during the walking start, they may be disqualified at the discretion of the Program Official(s).
- F. Start Signal
  - 1) When participants are in line at the starting line, the start signal will be given
  - 2) At the start signal, the race will begin.
  - 3) If heat participants are not in line when the start signal is given, the race may be re-run at the discretion of the Starting Judge. A participant who is out of line or who has not followed the Youth Horse Racing Rules and Regulations may be disqualified at the discretion of the Program Official(s).
- G. Determining the Winner
  - 1) A winner is the individual who successfully crosses the finish line first and is called the official winner by the Finish Judges. In the event a participant fails to follow the Youth Horse Racing Rules and Regulations, the participant may be disqualified at the discretion of the Program Official(s).
  - 2) Once a heat is called official, the finish order will be announced.
    - It is recommended to have the heat winner come to the winners circle for recognition.

- 3) After all the participants have raced in their heat, each heat winner will run against other heat winners in their division for a division champion.
  - 4) If a heat winner does not wish to participate or has been disqualified for a specified reason, the second place participant from the respective heat will take his/her place, and so forth.
  - 5) The division championship race will be run even if all of the heats are not represented.
  - 6) Dead Heats
    - a) When two or more participants run a dead heat, they will not race off. The participants who ran the dead heat shall be deemed as tied for the higher placing.
    - b) In a dead heat for first place, each participant shall be considered the winner
- H. After a heat has been raced, participants are required to return to the holding area until the completion of the Youth Horse Racing Program.

## **VII. General Rules**

1. All heats must be videotaped.
2. Protests shall be made only by a participant and/or his/her legal guardian. Protests must be made to the Program Official(s) immediately following the alleged incident.
3. If a race result is disputed, the Program Official(s) shall review the race with the participant and his/her legal guardian within 72 hours of the race.
4. If, at anytime during a race, a participant leaves the course, they may be disqualified at the discretion of the Program Official(s).
5. A participant who does not have their horse under control may be disqualified, not allowed to race, and/or asked to leave the holding area by the discretion of a Program Official(s).
6. A horse may only be raced by one individual
7. Each Youth Horse Racing Program must have individuals identified to fulfill the following roles:
  - A. Program Officials
    - 1) Host location is required to identify three individuals to serve as Program Officials.
      - a) If a representative of the Michigan Department of Agriculture is present, host location may request they serve as one of the three Program Officials.
      - b) At least one Program Official must be from the host location.
      - c) Program Officials will be announced and introduced to participants prior to the start of the event.
    - 2) Program Officials Stations during the race:
      - a) One Program Official must be stationed in the holding/staging area location
      - b) One Program Official must be stationed at the starting line location
      - c) One Program Official must be stationed at the finish line/announcers tower location

- 3) Program Officials Roles:
    - a) The Program Official stationed in the holding/staging area will observe participants in the holding area and the race participants as they walk toward the start line. They will be verifying, among other things, that participants are not receiving help from others to control their horse and that their horse is under control.
    - b) The Program Official stationed at the starting line will observe race participants as they cross the start line. This official will be verifying, among other things, that the race participants were in line when the start signal was given, and that there were not any false starts.
    - c) The Program Official stationed at the finish line will observe race participants as they come down the track and cross the finish line. This official, among other things, will verify that race participants do not cross over lanes, do not interfere with other race participants, and officiate the finish of the race participants.
  - 4) If a volunteer, administrator, bystander or participant has a complaint or feels another participant is unsafe, they must report it to a Program Official(s) who has the power to take appropriate action.
- B. Administrators
- 1) Starting Judge
    - One individual who will officiate the race starting line
  - 2) Finish Judges
    - Two individuals who will officiate the race finish order and must be stationed at the finish line
- C. Volunteers
- 1) Safety Equipment and Participant Numbers
    - At least one individual who will assist participants get a correct fitting safety vest and/or helmet and provide participants with their race number
  - 2) Tack Check
    - At least one individual who must check each participant's safety equipment and tack prior to their race
  - 3) Outriders
    - At least two individuals on horseback who are positioned at the finish line to assist participants in regaining control and/or slowing down their horse at the conclusion of their heat
    - Only the designated outriders' horses and the participants' horses will be allowed on the track/race area during the certification and/or racing program
  - 4) Video Person
    - One individual who will be responsible for video taping the entire race
  - 5) Announcer
    - One individual who will be responsible for all announcing during the Youth Horse Race including introducing participants and announcing heat placing

## **VIII. Safety**

1. The most important factor is the safety of the participant followed by the safety of the horse.
2. Participant Safety
  - A. Safety Equipment
    - 1) ASTM/SEI-approved riding helmets worn in the appropriate manner specified by the manufacturer are required to be worn by participants during all Youth Horse Racing Program events while on horseback.
    - 2) Protective vests are required to be worn by participants while completing the certification exercises and while racing in their heat(s).
    - 3) Individuals who are in different heats may share safety equipment.
    - 4) Sturdy boots with heels are required.
    - 5) The participant must wear long pants and long sleeved shirts.
  - B. Tack
    - 1) No tack or equipment should be used that compromises the safety of the participant or results in abusive, inhumane, or cruel treatment to the horse.
    - 2) The reins must be one continuous piece of material. Split reins that have been tied together will not be allowed.
    - 3) English, Western and Australian saddles may be used as long as they are in safe condition and deemed acceptable by the tack check individual.
    - 4) Breast collar or breast plates are allowed
    - 5) No whips, spurs, crops or bats may be used.
    - 6) One final check of equipment and the physical appearance of the participant and their horse will be made prior to the participant racing in the heat.
  - C. Run-away Horse
    - 1) Participants with a run-away horse will be disqualified at the discretion of the Program Official(s).
  - D. If an emergency dismount is needed, it is recommended the participant:
    - 1) Drop the stirrups
    - 2) Lay the reins on the neck close to the ears
    - 3) Place your hands on the neck or pommel of the saddle
    - 4) Swing one leg back and over while pushing up and away from the horse therefore landing safely away from the horse and facing the same direction as travel.
  - E. If an emergency dismount is needed while riding at a high speed, it is recommended the participant:
    - 1) Cross your shoulder towards your hip
    - 2) Roll off your horse into a ball position on the ground
    - 3) Immediately move out of the path of movement from the other horses.
3. Interference
  - A. There shall be no intentional bumping of horses.
  - B. No participant shall willfully strike or touch another participant or another participant's horse or equipment.
  - C. There shall be no actions performed intentionally by a participant or their mount to alter the outcome of the race.

- D. If a participant interferes with another participant, a Program Official(s) has the right to:
  - 1) Disqualify the participant
  - 2) Rank the participant behind the participant he/she interfered
  - 3) Rank the participant in the last place
- 4. Horse Health & Safety
  - A. Each horse entered to race in the Michigan Youth Horse Racing Program is subject to a health and soundness examination.
  - B. A horse does not need to be shod in order to race, however it is strongly recommended to prevent injury.
  - C. Leg bandages must be approved by the Program Official(s).
  - D. Horses should never be pulled up hard after the finish line. The horse should be allowed along the backside of the track to be brought down slowly after crossing the finish line.
  - E. Each horse must not have been subjected to freezing, icing, prolonged hosing with cold water, or any other means of reducing leg temperature within one hour of racing.
  - F. There shall be no use of drugs or unnatural substances unless written approval from a veterinarian is provided. Veterinarian written approval of prescribed drugs must be reported and a drug declaration form must be completed and submitted to Program Official(s) prior to the start of the YHR program.
  - G. If, during a race, a horse becomes crippled or otherwise obviously unable to finish the race, it shall be dismounted, unsaddled, and removed from the course. The horse may not be euthanized on the course without the permission of a veterinarian or Program Official(s). All medical expenses are the responsibility of the participant and his/her legal guardian.
  - H. Heat Stress
    - 1) Participants are responsible for the use of good judgment in the level of exertion performed during extreme heat and humid conditions.
    - 2) Participants are responsible to know the fitness level of their horse to avoid heat stress and exhaustion, which occurs in working horses when they are demanded to work beyond their fitness level.
    - 3) Participants need to be aware of heat stress warning signs:
      - a) Lack of elasticity in the skin
        - A pinch of skin pulled out from the neck or shoulder that does not spring back into place but stays pinched up for several seconds is a symptom of dehydration.
      - b) Mucous membranes in the mouth become dry and discolored
        - The color of the horse's gums should be pink and not brick red, which is symptomatic of dehydration. When a finger is pressed onto the gums, the color should return to pink. If the location of the pressed finger remains for a few seconds, the horse is likely to be dehydrated.
  - I. In the event of a heat stroke, it is recommended a participant:
    - 1) Contact a local veterinarian



- 2) Move the horse to a shady place
- 3) Hose the horse with cold water
  - Because hard working muscles can reach 110 degrees, which will cause muscle damage, it is recommended you cool the muscle fibers.
- 4) A horse may not be allowed to race if it shows any signs of heat stress, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke.

#### **IX. Sportsmanship and Conduct**

1. If, at anytime during the Youth Horse Racing Program, it is believed unsportsmanlike conduct had occurred, a participant may be disqualified at the discretion of a Program Official(s).
2. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but not limited to:
  - A. Offensive language
  - B. Derogatory statements
  - C. Mistreatment or abuse to a horse
  - D. Unwillingness to abide by Youth Horse Racing Program Rules and Regulations
3. Participant's use of alcohol or drugs during a Youth Horse Racing Program will result in disqualification.

#### **X. Risk Management & Emergency Procedures**

1. A veterinarian must be on call or present during the Youth Horse Racing Program.
2. A Program Official(s) must know the nearest hospital, their contact information, and the phone number for the local EMT.
3. The EMT service must be notified of the Youth Horse Racing Program event in advance and provided specific driving directions in order for them to be prepared. Some Youth Horse Racing Program host locations may require an EMT be present during the Youth Horse Racing Program.
4. It is recommended to always have someone present who is certified in CPR.
5. If there are any accidents or injuries during the Youth Horse Racing Program, a written report (Incident Report) must be submitted to a Program Official(s). The report must specify details of the accident or injury including, but not limited to:
  - A. Date, Time and Location of the incident
  - B. Name of Program Officials at the specified Youth Horse Racing Program event
  - C. Name of the participant(s) involved in the incident
  - D. Name of non participants involved in the incident
  - E. Name of horse(s) involved in the incident
  - F. Specific circumstances of the incident
  - G. Name of individuals who witness the incident
  - H. Details on human and equine injury as a result of the incident
  - I. Details on any human or equine treatment that was given as a result of the incident
  - J. Condition of the weather at the time of the incident
  - K. Other details that are pertinent to the explanation of the incident

- L. Printed name and signature of the person completing the incident report along with date of when the report was completed.

#### **XI. Equine Act Liability Act**

1. The Youth Horse Racing Program is protected by the Equine Activity Liability Act.
2. A warning sign stating the county fair is not liable for any accidents that may be encountered should be posted:

##### NOTICE

Under the Michigan Equine (Horse) Liability Act, an equine professional is not liable for an injury to, or the death of, a participant in an equine (horse) activity, resulting from an inherent risk of the equine (horse) activity.

-----  
Updated June 2006